

Article - Natural Resources

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§8-712.

(a) (1) Any vessel equipped with propulsion machinery of any type on the waters of the State shall be numbered for identification in accordance with this subtitle and any regulation pursuant to it. This provision does not apply to the following vessels:

(i) A vessel which has a valid document issued by the United States Coast Guard or its successor;

(ii) A vessel with a valid number awarded pursuant to federal law or a federally approved numbering system of another state, if the number awarded is displayed in accordance with the requirements of that system, and the certificate of number is available for inspection whenever the vessel is in use;

(iii) A vessel from a country other than the United States temporarily using the waters of the State for less than 90 days;

(iv) A vessel used for public service and owned by the United States government, another state, or any political subdivision;

(v) A ship's lifeboat;

(vi) A vessel propelled only by sail;

(vii) A vessel numbered according to the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971; or

(viii) A vessel manually propelled.

(2) The Department, by regulation, for the period the Department prescribes may exempt any vessel or class of vessels from the numbering provisions of this subtitle, if the vessel or class of vessels is exempted from the federal numbering requirements by statute, or rule or regulation.

(b) The owner of any vessel to be numbered by this subtitle shall file an application for a certificate of number with the Department. The application is on forms the Department approves, accompanied by the requisite fee, and signed by every vessel owner.

(c) (1) Certificates of number issued under this section shall be valid for a period not to exceed 2 years. The owner of the vessel may apply every other year for renewal of the certificate. The renewed certificate shall expire on December 31 of the calendar year following the year the certificate is issued. The fee for a 2-year certificate for vessels is \$24. Vessels 16 feet in length or less and equipped with a 7 1/2 horsepower motor or less are exempt from this fee. The fee to replace a lost, destroyed, or corrected certificate is \$2. The Department shall record any transaction or transfer of numbered boats. The Department may record any amount of money owing on a vessel required to be numbered at the time of sale. The Department may not effect a transfer of ownership until the amount of money owed as shown on the records of the Department is fully paid or recorded on the new title. Any vessel that is required to be numbered under this section that is exempt prior to January 1, 1974 shall be exempt from payment of this title tax.

(2) Emergency rescue boats and fire boats that belong to fire departments or rescue squads in Maryland:

(i) Shall be exempt from all registration fees; but

(ii) Shall apply for a registration renewal every 3 years.

(d) Upon receipt of the application in approved form, the Department shall issue to the applicant a certificate of boat number which shall contain the boat number issued to the vessel and additional information the Department prescribes by regulation. The certificate of boat number shall be available for inspection when the vessel is in use. The owner shall paint on or attach the boat number to each side of the forward half of the vessel's hull or superstructure for which the boat number is issued, displaying the boat number in the manner required by Department regulations and maintaining the boat number in legible condition.

(e) If a vessel required to be numbered under this subtitle is sold, transferred, abandoned, lost, stolen, or destroyed, the vessel's certificate expires at the time of the sale, transfer, abandonment, loss, theft, or destruction and then is invalid.

(f) There is a \$5 service charge for every check returned unpaid.

(g) The Department shall inform each holder of a certificate of boat number of the manner in which the boat owner may obtain a current copy of the U. S. Coast Guard rules and regulations applicable to the type of boat registered under the owner's boat number.

(h) If a person who applies for the issuance or renewal of a certificate of boat number for a vessel has an outstanding warrant for failing to appear in court to

answer a charging document alleging a violation under this subtitle, the Department shall refuse to issue or renew the certificate of boat number for the vessel until the person charged has complied with the provisions of § 1-205 of this article.

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